AMENDMENT

Amemdments to the Claims

Please cancel claim 34 without prejudice to Applicants' right to pursue the subject matter of the claim in this application or in a related application.

Please amend claims 25 and 26 to read as follows. (A marked-up version of the amended claims is enclosed.)

25. (Amended) An article of manufacture comprising an antimicrobial coating on a surface of the article of manufacture, wherein the antimicrobial coating comprises a nitrogen-containing polycationic polymer matrix having dispersed therein or attached thereto an antimicrobial metallic material such that the antimicrobial coating does not release biocidal amounts of elutables into the surrounding environment.

26. (Amended) The article of claim 25 wherein the nitrogen-containing polycationic polymer matrix comprises benzalkonium groups.

Amendments to the Specification

Please amend the paragraph on page 18 of the application extending from line 4 to the bottom of the page to read as follows. (A marked-up version of the amended paragraph is enclosed.)

Preferred cationic materials include benzalkoniumchloride derivatives, α-4-[1-tris(2-hydroxyethyl) ammonium-2-butenyl] poly[l-dimethylammonium-2-butenyl]-ω-tris(2-hydroxyethyl) ammonium chloride, and biguanides of the general formula:

$$Y_1\text{-}[\text{-NH-C(=NH)-NH-C(=NH)-NH-X-}]_n\text{-}Y_2$$

or their water soluble salts, where X is any aliphatic, cycloaliphatic, aromatic, substituted aliphatic, substituted aromatic, heteroaliphatic, heterocyclic, or heteroaromatic compound, or a mixture of any of these, and Y_1 and Y_2 are any aliphatic, cycloaliphatic, aromatic, substituted aliphatic, substituted aromatic, heteroaliphatic, heterocyclic, or heteroaromatic compound, or a mixture of any of these, and where n is an integer equal to or greater than 1. Preferred compounds include, e.g., chlorhexidine (available from Aldrich Chemical Co., Milwaukee, WI) or polyhexamethylene biguanide (available from Zeneca Biocides, Inc. of Wilmington, DE). The above-mentioned organic materials may be modified to include a thiol group in their structure so as to allow for the bonding of the compound to a metallic substrate, or may be derivatized with other functional groups to permit direct immobilization on a non-metallic substrate. For example, the above-mentioned organic materials may be suitably functionalized to incorporate groups such as hydroxy, amine, halogen, epoxy, alkyl or alkoxy silyl functionalities to enable direct immobilization to a surface.